

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL POSS DUPE

PAGE 01 SAIGON 01838 01 OF 03 191157Z

15

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 AID-05 EB-07

PM-03 INR-07 IO-10 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 DPW-01

PRS-01 OMB-01 SS-15 /081 W

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O R 191020Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2845

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USIA WASHDC

USDEL JEC PARIS UNN

CIA

DIA

JCS

JUSMAAG

WHITE HOUSE

USAJFKCMA/ATCS-WL-DSA

CINCPAC/POLAD

CINCPACAF

CINCPACFLT

CINCUSARPAC

DEPCHIEF JUSMAAG UDORN

USDAO/SAIGON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 SAIGON 01838 01 OF 03 191157Z

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW  
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 1 OF 3 SAIGON 1838

DEPT PASS IMMEDIATE IBS/NCA

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINR, PINS, PINT, MILI, VS, PFOR, VN, CH, TW, RP, ECON  
SUBJ: SAIGON'S MISSION WEEKLY--FEB 13-19,1975

WEEKA ITEMS

--THE MILITARY SITUATION

--SOUTH VIETNAMESE SENATORS SEEK CONTINUED US AID

--HOA HAO-GVN CONFLICT

--GVN DROPS OLD CHARGES AGAINST PRESS

--ADMIRAL GAYLER VISITS VIETNAM

--NEW DIOCESE & TWO NEW BISHOPS

--GVN REAFFIRMS SOVEREIGNTY OVER PARACELS AND SPRATLEYS

--ANTI-SMUGGLING CAMPAIGN UNDERWAY

--OFF-SHORE OIL FIND

--NORWAY TO PRIVDE US\$6 MILLION AID TO RVN

--POST HOLIDAY PRICE SLUMP

--GOLD AND DOLLAR PRICES ADVANCE

I. INTERNAL

A. THE MILITARY SITUATION

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PAGE 03 SAIGON 01838 01 OF 03 191157Z

THE GENERALLY QUIET SITUATION WITH RESPECT TO MILITARY ACTIVITY THAT HAD LED UP TO TET AND INTO ITS INITIAL STAGES CONTINUED THIS WEEK. RVNAF OFFICIALS STILL EXPECT, HOWEVER, THAT THIS RELATIVE LULL WILL SHORTLY BE REPLACED BY A SHARP ESCALATION IN THE FIGHTING. THERE ARE REPORTS THAT ONE COMMUNIST AIM WILL BE THE INTERDICTION OF PRINCIPAL LOCs, PERHAPS COUNTRY-WIDE. ANOTHER VNA/VC PRIME NEAR-TEAM TARGET IS STILL EXPECTED TO BE TAY NINH IN MR-3; THERE WAS ADDITIONAL COMMUNIST BUILD-UP NORTH OF THAT CITY THIS WEEK. THE NUMBER OF INCIDENTS, AND THE NUMBER OF COMMUNIST AND GVN FORCES KILLED

IN ACTION BASED ON INITIAL RVN REPORTS, WERE ALL DOAN THIRTY  
TO THIY-FIVE PERCENT FOR THE PERIOD.

B. SOUTH VIETNAMESE SENATORS SEEK CONTINUED US AID

ALL FORTY ONE PRO-GOVERNMENT SEATORS SIGNED A FEB 4 LETTER, MADE PUBLIC FEB 19, ASKING FOR CONTINUED US ASSISTANCE FROM THE US CONGRESS. THE LETTER WAS DRAWN UP IN PART TO COUNTER A JAN 17 LETTER SIGNED BY TWELVE LOWER HOUSE DEPUTIES TO THE US CONGRESS. SENATORS STRESS THAT LOWER HOUSE REPRESENTATIVES IN THEIR LETTER WERE NOT SPEAKING FOR THE MAJORITY OF SVN PEOPLE. SENATE LETTER NOTES THAT "ANY ALLEGATION THAT THE AID FUNDS RESERKVED BY THE AMERICAN PEOPLE FOR THE VIETNAMESE HAVE BEEN AIMED AT HELPING AN INDIVIDUAL AND IMPOSING A NEO-COLONIALIST REGIME IN THE RVN CONSTITUTES A DENIAL OF THE OBJECTIVE TO DEFEND THE IDEAL OF FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY HIGHLIGHTED IN THE AID IN GENERAL, AND AN INSULT TO THE US CONGRESS AND PEOPLE".

A SENATE DELEGATION COMPOSED OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS CHAIRMAN NGUYEN DUY TAI, UNITY BLOC LEADER HUYNH VAN CAO, FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEMBER TRAN TAN TOAN AND BUDGET COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PHAN DO THANH SAIGON FEB 14 TO DELIVER THE SENATE LETTER TO REPRESENTATIVES OF THE US CONGRESS. CONGRESS. A SECOND GROUP COMPOSED OF SENATE CHAIRMAN TRAN VAN LAM AND DEMOCRACY BLOC LEADER TRAN MINH TUNG LEFT FEB 16 FOR THE US.

C. HOA HAO-GVN CONFLICT

THE SITUATION REMAINS QUIET IN HOA HAO AREAS OF THE DELTA AFTER THE GVN CRACKDOWN DISBANDING ILLEGAL MILITIA (BAO AN) PRIMARILY UNDER CONTROL OF THE TUONG FACTION OF THE HOA HAO. GVN POLICE AND MILITARY SURROUNDING BAO AN CONCENTRATIONS-  
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PAGE 04 SAIGON 01838 01 OF 03 191157Z

MOST NOTABLY AT THE TAY AN PAGODA- CONTINUE THEIR POSTURE OF WATCHFUL WAITING WITH NEITHER SIDE WILLING TO PROVOKE OPEN CONFRONTATION. SEMI-OFFICIAL VN PRESS OF FEB 18 REPORTS MORE THAN 500 WEAPONS HAVE BEEN HANDED OVER AND SOME 1,444 DRAFTDODGERS AND DESERTERS HAVE TURNED THEMSELVES IN SINCE THE CRACKDOWN ON THE BAO AN BEGAN. (NO INDEPENDENT AMERICAN CONFIRMATION OF THESE FIGURES AVAILABLE AT THIS TIME.)

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PAGE 01 SAIGON 01838 02 OF 03 191150Z

10

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PRS-01 OMB-01 SS-15 /081 W

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O R 191020Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2846

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

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AMEMBASSY PARIS

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CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 SAIGON 01838 02 OF 03 191150Z

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

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CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 2 OF 3 SAIGON 1838

DEPT PASS IMMEDIATE IBS/NCA

TUONG FACTION SENATOR LE PHUOC SANG CONTINUES TO  
MANEUVER FOR NEGOTIATIONS WITH LIMITED SUCCESS. SANG CLAIMED  
TO US RECENTLY THAT 40 PRO-GOVERNMENT SENATORS AND A FEW  
MINISTERS HAD AGREED IN PRINCIPLE TO SPONSOR MEETING IN  
SAIGON BETWEEN HOA HAO LEADERS AND GOV'T REPS. (COMMENT:  
SANG'S CONCERN TO STRIKE A SETTLEMENT WITH GVN IS PROBABLY  
HEIGHTENED BY INDICATIONS THAT OTHER TWO MAJOR HOA HAO  
FACTIONS OF MESSRS. LIEM AND NHIEM READY TO PICK UP THE  
PIECES AS TUONG FACTION PRESTIGE SUFFERS FROM BAO AN DISSOLUTION.)

D. GVN DROPS OLD CHARGES AGAINST PRESS

THE MOI ANNOUNCED THAT CHARGES LONG OUTSTANDING (SAIGON 1805,  
0041, 15830) AGAINST SIX SAIGON DAILIES FOR LIBELING THE  
PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT WOULD BE DROPPED. IN THE CASE  
OF THREE OF THE DAILIES (SONG THAN, DIEN TIN AND DAI DAN TOC)  
CHARGES WERE FOR PUBLISHING PACM'S SO-CALLED INDICTMENT NO. 1.  
THESE THREE CASES HAVE BEEN SCHEDULED FOR COURT HEARINGS  
PREVIOUSLY AND HAVE BEEN THE OCCASION FOR PACM DEMONSTRATIONS  
ON OCT 31 AND NOV 28. THE MOI ANNOUNCEMENT EXPLAINED THAT IN  
VIEW OF THE GVN'S RECENT ARREST OF A NUMBER OF JOURNALISTS  
AS COVERT COMMUNIST AGENTS AND THE CLOSING OF  
FOUR OF THE SIX DAILIES INVOLED (ALL BUT CHINH LUAN AND DAI  
DAN TOC), NO FURTHER ACTION WAS REQUIRED.

E. ADMIRAL GAYLER VISITS VIETNAM

WINDING UP A BRIEF VISIT TO CAMBODIA AND SOUTH VIETNAM,  
ADMIRAL NOEL GAYLER, COMMANDER OF US FORCES IN THE PACIFIC,  
MET WITH VARIOUS GVN OFFICIALS DURING HIS TWO DAY STAY IN  
SAIGON. GAYLET, ALONG WITH EMBASSY OFFICIALS, WAS RECEIVED  
BY PRESIDENT NGUYEN VAN THIEU AND BY PRIME MINISTER  
TRAN THIEN KHIEM FOR A GENERAL REVIEW OF THE MILITARY SITUATION.

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PAGE 03 SAIGON 01838 02 OF 03 191150Z

F. NEW DIOCESE & TWO NEW BISHOPS

THE OFFICE OF THE APOSTOLIC DELEGATE ANNOUNCED THAT POPE  
PAUL VI HAS ESTABLISHED A NEW DIOCESE AND CREATED TWO NEW  
BISHOPS IN VIETNAM. NEW DIOCESE, PHAN THIET, COMPRISES  
BINH THUAN AND BINH TUY PROVINCES AND IS PART OF SAIGON  
ARCHDIOCESE. NEW BISHOPS DESIGNATE ARE FR. PAUL NGUYEN VAN  
HOA OF BAN ME THUOT, WHO GOES TO NEWLY-CREATED PHAN THIET  
DIOCESE, AND FR. NGUYEN SON LAM, HEAD OF SEMINARY IN HUE, WHO  
BECOMES BISHOP OF DALAT, A POST VACANT FOR MANY MONTHS.

II. EXTERNAL

A. GVN REAFFIRMS SOVEREIGNTY OVER PARACELS AND SPRATLEYS

AT A LOW-KEY PRESS CONFERENCE FEBRUARY 14, THE GVN ISSUED A DECLARATION REAFFIRMING ITS SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE PARACEL AND SPRATLEY ISLAND GROUPS. THE PRESS CONFERENCE MARKED THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF A SIMILAR DECLARATION MADE BY THE GVN FOLLOWING THE PRC SEIZURE OF THE PARACEL GROUP IN JANUARY, 1974. THE GVN SPOKESMAN MADE CLEAR THAT THE GVN SEEKS TO SOLVE DISPUTES OVER THE ISLANDS BY NEGOTIATIONS RATHER THAN BY FORCE AND ALSO TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO CRITIZE THE "VIETNAMESE COMMUNISTS" FOR FAILING TO RAISE THEIR VOICES AGAINST THE PRG AND IN SUPPORT OF THE VIETNAMESE CLAIM TO THE ISLANDS. A 105 PAGE WHITE PAPER DOCUMENTING THE GVN CLAIM TO THE ISLAND GROUPS WAS ALSO PRESENTED. THE WHITE PAPER CONCENTRATES ON REFUTING THE PRC CLAIM TO THE ISLANDS, NOTING THAT THE GVN HAS EXERCISED SOVEREIGNTY, IN THE FORM OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATION AND METEOROLOGICAL STATIONS, OVER THE ISLANDS FOR MANY YEARS. PAPER ALSO MENTIONS ROC AND PHILIPPINE PRESENCE IN THE SPRATELY GROUP.

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BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

III. ECONOMIC

A. ANTI-SMUGGLING CAMPAIGN UNDERWAY

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER HAO'S PROMISED ANTI-SMUGGLING CAMPAIGN GOT UNDERWAY FEBRUARY 16. FINANCE MINISTER LE QUANG TRUONG ANNOUNCED THE CAMPAIGN IN A REVISED SPEECH. HE SAID THAT THE CAMPAIGN IS INTENDED TO PREVENT FURTHER LOSS OF REVENUES TO THE GOVERNMENT FROM SALE OF CONTRABAND, TO PROTECT LOCAL INDUSTRIES, AND TO ENCOURAGE GREATER AUSTERITY AMONG THE PEOPLE.

THE CAMPAIGN IS SCHEDULED TO LAST THREE MONTHS. IN THE FIRST PHASE, THE GOVERNMENT IS USING RADIO AND TV BROADCASTS TO CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 SAIGON 01838 02 OF 03 191150Z

PUBLICIZE ITS ANTI-SMUGGLING PROGRAM AND ENCOURAGE COOPERATION BOTH FROM MERCHANTS AND CONSUMERS. WITHIN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS THE GOVERNMENT ALSO PLANS TO INCREASE ITS SURVEILLANCE OF BORDER AREAS AND OTHER KNOWN ENTRY POINTS FROM SMUGGLED GOODS. MEANWHILE, RETAIL MERCHANTS WILL HAVE A FEW MORE WEEKS TO SELL OFF THEIR CURRENT INVENTORIES OF CONTRABAND BEFORE THE GOVERNMENT CRACKS DOWN ON SALES.

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 01 SAIGON 01838 03 OF 03 191149Z

12

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 AID-05 EB-07

PM-03 INR-07 IO-10 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 DPW-01

PRS-01 OMB-01 SS-15 /081 W

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O R 191020Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2847

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USIA WASHDC

USDEL JEC PARIS UNN

CIA

DIA

JCS

JUSMAAG

WHITE HOUSE

USAJFKCMA/ATCS-WL-DSA

CINCPAC/POLAD

CINCPACAF

CINCPACFLT

CINCUSARPAC

DEPCHEF JUSMAAG UDORN

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CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 SAIGON 01838 03 OF 03 191149Z

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 3 OF 3 SAIGON 1838

DEPT PASS IMMEDIATE IBS/NCA

B. OFF-SHORE OIL FIND

THE GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED LAST WEEK THAT THE MOBIL OIL COMPANY RIG OPERATING OFF-SHORE HAS DISCOVERED OIL AND GAS ON ITS FIRST DRILLING ATTEMPT. THE PRELIMINARY TESTS INDICATED A DAILY FLOW OF SEVERAL HUNDRED BARRELS OF CRUDE OIL AND SEVERAL HUNDRED THOUSAND CUBIC FEET OF NATURAL GAS. TESTS ARE CONTINUING AT THIS SITE TO DETERMINE WHETHER IT IS COMMERCIALLY EXPLOITABLE.

C. NORWAY TO PROVIDE US\$6 MILLION AID TO RVN

A NORWEGIAN AID DELEGATION VISITED SAIGON LAST WEEK TO DISCUSS A US\$6 MILLION AID GRANT TO VIET NAM. ABOUT \$3.6 MILLION WILL BE USED TO PURCHASE FERTILIZER, WITH \$2 MILLION FOR FISHING EQUIPMENT AND THE BALANCE FOR PAPER AND PULP.

D. POST HOLIDAY PRICE SLUMP

USAID'S CONSUMER PRICE INDEX FOR SAIGON DROPPED 5.8 PERCENT IN THE WEEK ENDING FEBRUARY 17. THE DECLINE DID NOT QUITE OFFSET THE 8 PERCENT SURGE IN PRICES THAT OCCURRED THE PREVIOUS WEEK, JUST PRIOR TO THE TET HOLIDAY. AS DURING THE PRE-TET PERIOD, RICE PRICES CONTINUED STABLE THIS WEEK, BUT BROAD DECLINES OCCURRED IN MOST OTHER FOOD PRODUCTS. THE FOOD CATEGORY WAS DOWN 7.1 PERCENT. APPAREL, TRANSPORTATION AND CIGARETTE COSTS ALSO DROPPED SHARPLY, ACCOUNTING FOR A 3.6 PERCENT DECLINE IN THE NON-FOOD INDEX. TO DATE IN 1975, THE OVERALL CONSUMER INDEX HAS INCREASED 6 PERCENT.

E. GOLD AND DOLLAR PRICES ADVANCE

BLACK MARKET DOLLAR QUOTES ROSE TO VN\$812/US\$1 FOR \$100 GREEN ON FEBRUARY 17. THE PREVIOUS WEEK'S RATE WAS VN\$805/US\$1. GOLD PRICES ALSO INCHED UP FROM US\$200.25 TO US\$206.17 PER TROY OUNCE (COMPUTED AT THE OFFICIAL EXCHANGE RATE). FIGURED AT CURRENT BLACK MARKET DOLLAR RATES, SAIGON GOLD PRICES WERE SLIGHTLY LOWER THAN THE REPORTED HONG KONG PRICE -- US\$181.78.

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PAGE 03 SAIGON 01838 03 OF 03 191149Z

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## Message Attributes

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**Copy:** SINGLE  
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**Disposition Authority:** buchantr  
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